

### REMARKS

The Office Action mailed December 4, 2008, has been received and its contents carefully noted. The pending claims, claims 3, 4, 8-10 and 12-24, were rejected while claims 5 and 7 were noted as being withdrawn from consideration. It is noted that the rejected dependent claims 16-22 and 24 depend from withdrawn claim 5. Thus, if withdrawn claim 5 is found allowable upon further consideration, it is respectfully submitted that the noted dependent claims be found allowable as well.

By this Response, claim 3 has been amended and claim 25 is newly added. Support may be found in the specification and the claims as originally filed. See, for example, paragraph 0099 of the published application. No statutory new matter has been added. Therefore, reconsideration and entry of the claims, as amended, are respectfully requested.

#### Rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 3, 4, 8-10 and 12-24 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sickles in view of Binoche. Specifically, the Examiner deemed that it would have been obvious to replace the electrodes with insulatively shielded electrodes placed in the interiors of the projections in which the electrodes have distal ends covered by the projections.

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 3 has been amended such that the insulatively shielded electrodes protrude forward and have distal ends covered by the projections located in front of the insulatively shielded electrodes, respectively.

Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Sickles and Binoche does not teach or suggest in any fashion the invention as set forth in independent claim 3. Specifically, Sickles does not teach or suggest the insulatively shielded electrodes according to the claimed invention and Binoche does not alleviate the deficiencies of Sickles. In particular, Binoche discloses a spray-gun apparatus comprising electrodes E1 and E2 such that electrode E1 has a distal end bent at right angles and exposed outside an air head 21 and electrode E2 has a distal end which is also exposed outside the air head 21 as shown in Figures 9 and 10. Thus, Binoche does not teach or suggest insulatively shielded electrodes that protrude forward and have distal ends covered by the projections located in front of the insulatively shielded electrodes,

respectively.

Therefore, the claimed invention as a whole is not taught or suggested by the combination of Sickles and Binoche. Thus, claim 3 and the claims that depend thereon are novel and unobvious and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) should be withdrawn.

**Request for Interview**

Applicants respectfully request either a telephonic or an in-person interview should there be any remaining issues. (This is inclusive of any issues on the merits as well as any procedural issues that may arise.)

**Reference to Earlier Information Disclosure Statement Filing:**

The Examiner's attention is drawn to the Information Disclosure Statement that was filed on March 2, 2009, together with a copy of a JP office action and a citation of the references cited therein. A check of the record for this case shows that JP53-120750 was previously cited and supplied in an earlier Office Action. Also, as noted in the Information Disclosure Statement the JP 9-502647 reference represents a family counterpart to the earlier made of record US 5685482. In this regard, reference is made to the enclosed full copy of JP9502647 and the associated abstract showing the "also published as" reference to US 5685482. It is respectfully requested that the examiner confirm review of the references cited in the March 2, 2009 and not deemed duplicative relative to earlier filings.

**CONCLUSION**

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

It is not believed that extensions of time are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in accompanying documents. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to prevent abandonment of this application, then such extensions of time are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. 1.136(a), and any fees required therefor are hereby authorized to be charged to **Deposit Account No. 02-4300, Attorney Docket No. 034206.002.**

Respectfully submitted,  
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